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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

U.S. BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

WASHINGTON

## ILLITERACY IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

The Bureau of the Census of the Department of Commerce has just published a table giving the percentages of illiteracy in most of the principal countries of the world, the figures having been brought as nearly up to date as the available sources of information permit.

Illiteracy statistics of different countries are not always strictly comparable, because the basis is not always the same. Quite generally, however, the percentage of illiteracy here given is based upon the total population over 10 years of age, which is the basis in the United States, but sometimes it is necessary to accept some other age limit, and in several countries the only available figures refer to illiteracy among army recruits or to that shown by the marriage records.

In the United States the percentage of illiteracy is 7.7 for the total population (over 10 years of age) and 3 for the native white population. In Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom the percentage of illiteracy is lower than that for the native white population of the United States. Doubtless the list should also include Norway, although no figures are available for that country; but in the other European countries the percentage of illiteracy is higher than it is in the United States, and usually very much higher. In Bulgaria it is 65 per cent; in Greece 70, in Hungary 33, in Italy 37, in Portugal 69, in Roumania 61, in Russia 69, in Servia 79, and in Spain 58. There is less illiteracy in Australia than in the United States, but in all other non-European countries the percentage of illiteracy is in general very high.

# ILLITERACY IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

The term "illiterate," as used in the table below, includes all persons unable to write their own language, except in the case of figures marked with an asterisk (\*), where the basis is inability to read. In some instances, however, the figures for army recruits are taken from Otto Hübner's Geographisch-Statistische Tabellen for 1913, in which the use of the term "illiteracy" is not in most cases defined.

COUNTRY.	Per cent illiterate.	Basis.	Year.
<b>EUROPE.</b>			
Austria.....	13. 7	Population over 11 years....	1910
Belgium.....	{ <sup>a</sup> 12. 7	Population over 10 years....	1910
	7. 9	Army recruits.....	1913
	65. 5	Population over 10 years....	1905
Bulgaria.....	{ 25. 4	Army recruits.....	1909
	58. 4	Marriages.....	1901-10
Denmark.....	0. 2	Army recruits.....	1907
England and Wales.....	{ 1. 8	Marriages.....	1901-10
	14. 1	Population over 10 years....	1906
France.....	{ 4. 3	Army recruits.....	1912
	4. 1	Marriages.....	1901-10
	<sup>b</sup> 0. 05	Army recruits.....	1912
Greece.....	{ <sup>c</sup> 57. 2	Population over 10 years....	1907
	30. 0	Army recruits.....	No date.
Hungary.....	<sup>d</sup> 33. 3	Population over 6 years....	1910
Ireland.....	{ <sup>e</sup> 9. 2	Population over 9 years....	1911
	8. 1	Marriages.....	1901-10
	<sup>*</sup> 37. 0	Population over 10 years....	1911
Italy.....	{ <sup>a</sup> 31. 1	Army recruits.....	1910
	38. 7	Marriages.....	1901-10
	<sup>e</sup> 57. 5	Population over 5 years....	1901
Maltese Islands.....	{ <sup>f</sup> 0. 8	Army recruits.....	1912
The Netherlands.....	{ 2. 2	Marriages.....	1901-10
	<sup>g</sup> 68. 9	Population over 10 years....	1911
Portugal.....	{ <sup>b</sup> 0. 02	Army recruits.....	1910
	0. 4	Marriages.....	1901-10
	<sup>f</sup> 60. 6	Population over 7 years....	1909
Roumania.....	{ <sup>c</sup> 41. 0	Army recruits.....	1911
Russia.....	{ <sup>h</sup> 69. 0	Population over 10 years....	1897
	61. 7	Army recruits.....	1894
	1. 6	Marriages.....	1901-10
Scotland.....	{ 78. 9	Population over 11 years....	1900
	43. 4	Army recruits.....	1911
	36. 7	Marriages.....	1901-10
Spain.....	58. 7	Population over 10 years....	1900
Sweden.....	0. 2	Army recruits.....	1911
Switzerland.....	<sup>i</sup> 0. 3	Army recruits.....	1911
United Kingdom.....	1. 0	Army recruits.....	1903-04

(See notes on page 4.)

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COUNTRY.	Per cent illiterate.	Basis.	Year.
<b>AMERICA.</b>			
Continental United States:			
Total population.....	7.7	Population over 10 years....	1910
Native white.....	3.0	Population over 10 years....	1910
Native parentage.....	3.7	Population over 10 years....	1910
Foreign or mixed parentage.....	1.1	Population over 10 years....	1910
Foreign-born white.....	12.7	Population over 10 years....	1910
Negro.....	30.4	Population over 10 years....	1910
Indian.....	45.3	Population over 10 years....	1910
Chinese.....	15.8	Population over 10 years....	1910
Japanese.....	9.2	Population over 10 years....	1910
Argentina.....	54.4	Population over 6 years.....	1895
Bolivia.....	82.9	Population over 7 years.....	1900
Brazil.....	85.2	All ages.....	1890
British Honduras.....	68.8	All ages.....	1901
Canada.....	11.0	Population over 5 years.....	1911
Chile.....	*49.9	Population over 10 years....	1907
Colombia.....	*73.0	Males of all ages.....	1912
Costa Rica.....	80.2	All ages.....	1892
Cuba.....	*43.4	Population over 10 years....	1907
Guatemala.....	92.7	All ages.....	1893
Mexico.....	70.7	Population over 12 years....	1910
Newfoundland.....	45.8	Population over 5 years.....	1901
Porto Rico.....	66.5	Population over 10 years....	1910
Uruguay.....	<sup>a</sup> 39.8	Population over 5 years.....	1908
<b>AUSTRALIA.</b>			
Commonwealth of Australia.....	*j 1.8	Population over 10 years....	1911
New South Wales.....	{ *j 2.0	Population over 10 years....	1911
	{ 1.0	Marriages.....	1901-10
New Zealand.....	{ *k 0.9	Population over 10 years....	1911
	{ 0.3	Marriages.....	1901-10
Queensland.....	{ *j 2.5	Population over 10 years....	1911
	{ 2.0	Marriages.....	1901-10
South Australia.....	{ *j 1.8	Population over 10 years....	1911
	{ 0.8	Marriages.....	1901-10
Tasmania.....	{ *j 3.3	Population over 10 years....	1911
	{ 2.4	Marriages.....	1901-10
Victoria.....	{ *j 1.1	Population over 10 years....	1911
	{ 0.4	Marriages.....	1901-10
Western Australia.....	{ *j 1.6	Population over 10 years....	1911
	{ 0.6	Marriages.....	1901-10
<b>ASIA AND OCEANIA.</b>			
Ceylon:			
All races.....	78.3	All ages.....	1901
European race.....	11.9	All ages.....	1901
Other than European.....	78.4	All ages.....	1901
India.....	<sup>l</sup> 92.1	Population over 10 years....	1911
Philippine Islands.....	<sup>m</sup> 55.5	Population over 10 years....	1903
Russia.....	<sup>n</sup> 87.3	Population over 10 years....	1897
Hawaii.....	26.8	Population over 10 years....	1910

(See notes on page 4.)



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COUNTRY.	Percent illiterate.	Basis.	Year.
<b>AFRICA.</b>			
Algeria.....	13. 0	Army recruits.....	1912
Cape of Good Hope:			
All races.....	64. 0	Population over 10 years....	1911
European race.....	3. 8	Population over 10 years....	1911
Other than European.....	82. 8	Population over 10 years....	1911
Egypt.....	<sup>c</sup> 92. 7	Population over 10 years....	1907
Natal:			
All races.....	86. 7	Population over 10 years....	1911
European race.....	1. 6	Population over 10 years....	1911
Other than European.....	94. 8	Population over 10 years....	1911
Orange Free State:			
All races.....	58. 0	Population over 10 years....	1911
European race.....	2. 7	Population over 10 years....	1911
Other than European.....	85. 8	Population over 10 years....	1911
Transvaal:			
All races.....	69. 4	Population over 10 years....	1911
European race.....	2. 5	Population over 10 years....	1911
Other than European.....	91. 1	Population over 10 years....	1911
Union of South Africa:			
All races.....	69. 7	Population over 10 years....	1911
European race.....	3. 0	Population over 10 years....	1911
Other than European.....	88. 2	Population over 10 years....	1911

<sup>a</sup> Based on number unable to read and write.

<sup>b</sup> Based on number without schooling.

<sup>c</sup> Based on number illiterate; but this term is not defined in the census report.

<sup>d</sup> Based on number over 6 not reported as able to read and write.

<sup>e</sup> Native Maltese population.

<sup>f</sup> Based on number unable either to read or write.

<sup>g</sup> Including Azores and Madeira.

<sup>h</sup> Exclusive of Finland.

<sup>i</sup> Based on number without any proficiency in writing.

<sup>j</sup> Exclusive of full-blooded aboriginals.

<sup>k</sup> Exclusive of Maoris and Chinese and of population of annexed Pacific islands.

<sup>l</sup> Illiteracy, as here used, represents inability to write a letter to a friend and read his reply.

<sup>m</sup> Civilized population.

<sup>n</sup> Caucasasia, Siberia, and Central Asia.



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